

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claim 11 has been canceled without prejudice and without disclaimer. Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12-16, 19, and 20 have been amended. New claim 21 has been added. No new matter has been introduced. Applicants believe the claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Independent claims 1 and 14 as amended recite a computer system including a plurality of first storage devices storing file management information, a plurality of first computers connected via a storage network to the first storage devices, a plurality of second computers connected via another network to the first computers, a plurality of second storage devices connected to the second computers, respectively for storing file data managed by the second computers, respectively, a third computer connected to the first and second computers, a third storage device connected to the third computer for holding data concerning accounting conditions in respect of each of the second computers, and a client computer connected via the another network to the first computers.

Support for the amendment may be found, for instance, at page 12, line 27 to page 13, line 11; and Figs. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 13. In the specific embodiment shown, a file attributes database 110 is connected to the third computer for holding an attributes table 120 including file IDs and creation dates for file data, an access right table 130, and an extended attributes table 140 which is provided for each of the second storage devices and which includes an encryption key 2420. As stated at page 12, line 27 to page 13, line 11:

Here, if the file managed by this computer system is an encrypted file the extended attributes table 140 shown in FIG. 2 is used (the encrypted file is registered in that table) but if the file is of another type, this extended file attributes table 140 is not used (the file is not registered in that table). In this way, *files of specific types can be managed through specific tables as an extended attributes table 140 storing file attributes is established individually for each file attribute.* Management in this way enables *management of a variety of different file attributes without an excessive increase in the size of a table.* (Emphasis added)

Amended claims 1 and 14 further recite that, when the third computer finds an error that has occurred in updating the file data after collecting results of executed processes, the third computer transmits a request for adding a new record in the third storage device. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 9, the results of the executed database update request is collected and it is decided whether the processes were successful in step 5410. If the update processes fail, an error has occurred and a new record registration request is transmitted to the storage device in step 5420. See page 26, lines 7-26.

Amended claims 1 and 14 also recite that, when the third computer refers to the new record and the each data concerning accounting conditions stored in the third storage device to calculate charges for updating the file data encrypted. This is illustrated in the embodiment shown in FIG. 13, at step 5630.

Independent claims 1 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Mock et al. (US 2002/0161757 A1). The dependent claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mock et al. or a combination of Mock et al. and other references, including Kojima et al. (US 6,681,227), Garrison (US 2002/0069355 A1), Shear (US 5,410,598), and Hiroshi (US 2002/0152121).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 14 are novel and patentable over Mock et al. and the other references because, for instance, they do not teach or suggest that one of the second computers executes updating the file data in the second storage devices by referring to the access right table to read data from or write data to the file data and, by referring to the each extended attributes table, and determines whether to encrypt the file data in response to contents of the encryption key of the extended attributes table. Nor do they disclose that, when the third computer finds an error that has occurred in updating the file data after collecting results of executed processes, the third computer transmits a request for adding a new record in the third storage device. The references further fail to teach that the third computer refers to the new record and the each data concerning accounting conditions stored in the third storage device to calculate charges for updating the file data encrypted.

Mock et al. merely discloses a method and an apparatus for indexing, searching, and retrieving data from data sets, which may reside in the same database or be

distributed across different databases. Nothing in Mock et al. suggests to "solve a problem of waste of management resources/wasteful management involved in the setting of information defining access rights of multiple users to a single file and the setting of differing file attributes information for each file" (see Abstract). More specifically, Mock et al. does not show "a file attributes DB operating as a database managing file attributes, an accounting information DB as a database managing accounting information and a local file system storing file data" or that the "accounting information DB holds records for each combination of a user or group and a server and adds records for each additional user or server" (see Abstract). The other references do not cure the deficiencies of Mock et al.

For at least the forgoing reasons, independent claims 1 and 14, and claims 2-10, 12, 13, and 15-21 depending therefrom, are novel and patentable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



Chun-Pok Leung
Reg. No. 41,405

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400
Fax: 415-576-0300
RL:rl
60587361 v1